

“Sent Out By Our Great Father”

Zebulon Montgomery Pike’s Journal and Route Across Kansas, 1806

edited by Leo E. Oliva

Zebulon Montgomery Pike, a lieutenant in the First U.S. Infantry, led an exploring expedition in search of the source of the Mississippi River in 1805–1806. Soon after his return to St. Louis in July 1806, General James Wilkinson sent Lieutenant Pike, promoted to captain a few weeks later, to explore the southwestern portion of the Louisiana Purchase, departing from the military post of Belle Fontaine near St. Louis on July 15, 1806. His expedition began as Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were nearing completion of their two-year expedition up the Missouri River and across the mountains to the Pacific Ocean and back. Pike crossed present Missouri, most of the way by boat on the Missouri and Osage Rivers, where he delivered fifty-one members of the Osage tribe to the village of the Grand Osage in late August.

On September 3 Pike entered present Kansas at the end of the day. His command, including Lieutenant James B. Wilkinson (son of General Wilkinson), Dr. John H. Robinson (civilian surgeon accompanying the expedition), interpreter Antoine François “Baronet” Vásquez (called Baroney in the journal), and eighteen enlisted men, was accompanied by several Osages and two Pawnees as guides. Because of bad feelings between the Osage and Kansa Indians, some of Pike’s Osage guides turned back, and those who continued led his party a

Leo E. Oliva, a native Kansan and a former university professor, became interested in frontier military history during the centennial celebration of the founding of Fort Larned in 1959 and has been researching and writing about the frontier army ever since. His many publications include *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, six of the eight volumes in the *Kansas Forts Series*, and *Fort Union and the Frontier Army in the Southwest*. He is also editor and publisher of the *Santa Fe Trail Association quarterly*, *Wagon Tracks*, and serves on the *Zebulon Pike Bicentennial Commission*.

Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains 29 (Spring 2006): 14–33.



Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike

"SENT OUT BY OUR GREAT FATHER"

Traverse Table from the Osage				Course to the Pawnee Republic			
Date	Course	Distance	Day	Date	Course	Distance	Day
1st	N 80° W	4	8	21st	N 70° W	10	10
2	N 80° W	4		22nd	N 70° W	12	21
3	N 70° W	4	10	23rd	N 70° W	10	22
4	N 70° W	4	11	24th	N 70° W	10	23
5	N 70° W	4	12	25th	N 70° W	10	24
6	N 70° W	4	13	26th	N 70° W	10	25
7	N 70° W	4	14	27th	N 70° W	10	26
8	N 70° W	4	15	28th	N 70° W	10	27
9	N 70° W	4	16	29th	N 70° W	10	28
10	N 70° W	4	17	30th	N 70° W	10	29
11	N 70° W	4	18	1st Oct	N 70° W	10	30
12	N 70° W	4	19	2nd Oct	N 70° W	10	31
13	N 70° W	4	20	3rd Oct	N 70° W	10	
14	N 70° W	4	21	4th Oct	N 70° W	10	
15	N 70° W	4	22	5th Oct	N 70° W	10	
16	N 70° W	4	23	6th Oct	N 70° W	10	
17	N 70° W	4	24	7th Oct	N 70° W	10	
18	N 70° W	4	25	8th Oct	N 70° W	10	
19	N 70° W	4	26	9th Oct	N 70° W	10	
20	N 70° W	4	27	10th Oct	N 70° W	10	
21	N 70° W	4	28	11th Oct	N 70° W	10	
22	N 70° W	4	29	12th Oct	N 70° W	10	
23	N 70° W	4	30	13th Oct	N 70° W	10	
24	N 70° W	4	31	14th Oct	N 70° W	10	
25	N 70° W	4		15th Oct	N 70° W	10	
26	N 70° W	4		16th Oct	N 70° W	10	
27	N 70° W	4		17th Oct	N 70° W	10	
28	N 70° W	4		18th Oct	N 70° W	10	
29	N 70° W	4		19th Oct	N 70° W	10	
30	N 70° W	4		20th Oct	N 70° W	10	
31	N 70° W	4		21st Oct	N 70° W	10	
32	N 70° W	4		22nd Oct	N 70° W	10	
33	N 70° W	4		23rd Oct	N 70° W	10	
34	N 70° W	4		24th Oct	N 70° W	10	
35	N 70° W	4		25th Oct	N 70° W	10	
36	N 70° W	4		26th Oct	N 70° W	10	
37	N 70° W	4		27th Oct	N 70° W	10	
38	N 70° W	4		28th Oct	N 70° W	10	
39	N 70° W	4		29th Oct	N 70° W	10	
40	N 70° W	4		30th Oct	N 70° W	10	
41	N 70° W	4		31st Oct	N 70° W	10	
42	N 70° W	4					
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98	N 70° W	4					
99	N 70° W	4					
100	N 70° W	4					

Pike began his traverse tables at the back of his field notebook. Above are two pages recording the dates, distances, and remarks of his journey during September 1806. After leaving the Osage villages, Pike entered present Kansas on September 3 and proceeded generally northwest until he reached the Pawnee village just over the Kansas line near the Republican River between present Guide Rock and Red Cloud, Nebraska. Pike remained at the Pawnee villages from September 25 through October 7.

circuitous route to avoid any contact with the Kansas on the way to the Pawnee village.

Although it was once believed that Pike spent time at a Pawnee village in Kansas, which is now Pawnee Indian Museum State Historic Site in Republic County, the historical and archeological evidence points to the Pawnee village near the Republican River between Guide Rock and Red

Cloud, Nebraska, as the one near which Pike camped from September 25 to October 7, 1806, to meet with the Pawnees living there.¹ Pike's journal entries for these few days spent north of present Kansas are included in this reprint.

1. Frank J. Munday, "Pike-Pawnee Village Site: Review and Summary of the Evidence in the Case," *Nebraska History* 10 (July-September 1927): 168-92.

At this village Pike learned that some four hundred Spanish troops had preceded his arrival by a few weeks. From the Pawnee village into present Colorado, which the expedition entered on November 11, 1806, Pike followed closely the route of those Spanish troops. Later, in Mexico, Pike spent time with the leader of the Spanish expedition, Lieutenant Facundo Melgares.

Since Pike was the first U.S. Army explorer to cross Kansas, and his expedition visited more areas of Kansas than any other military exploring expedition, his journal provides a "first view" of the region. It was the first time detailed information was published in the United States about present Kansas. Although sketchy much of the time, the journal provides information about the geography and residents of the land in 1806. Pike's report on the region, an appendix to his journal and a portion of which is reproduced here, compared the area of western Kansas to a desert, and that view affected national policy toward the Indians and white settlement of the area for nearly half a century.

Pike's journals and reports from his two expeditions, 1805–1807, were first printed in 1810. Several later editions appeared.² The journal of his second expedition especially was of interest to enterprising merchants in the Mississippi and Missouri Valleys because of Pike's observations about the potential for trade with northern Mexico. Pike's journal and reports, including the maps published with them, could guide merchants across present Kansas to New Mexico, and his descriptions of the economy and culture there would help them open trade and, in fact, encouraged them to do so. As early as 1812, trading expeditions inspired by Pike's publication were outfitted to attempt to open trade with New Mexico. These all failed until 1821, when Mexico achieved independence from Spain and traders from the United States were welcomed by New Mexico Governor Facundo Melgares who had preceded Pike on the plains in 1806.

2. The portions of the journal of the trip across present Kansas printed here are from the first edition, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi, and through the Western Parts of Louisiana, to the Sources of the Arkansas, Kans, La Platte, and Pierre Jaun, Rivers, Performed by Order of the Government of the United States during the Years 1805, 1806, and 1807* (Philadelphia: C. & A. Conrad and Co., 1810), 133–62. This first edition has been reprinted under the title *Sources of the Mississippi and the Western Louisiana Territory* (Readex Microprint, 1966). See Elliott Coues, ed., *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike . . .*, 3 vols. (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1895), reissued in two volumes (1965; reprint, New York: Dover, 1987); Donald Jackson, ed., *The Journals of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, with Letters and Related Documents*, 2 vols. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966). Both sets contain much supplementary information, records, and notes in addition to Pike's journals, maps, correspondence, and reports.

In this reprint, corrections, additions, and identifications of persons and places appear in brackets. Original spelling has been retained. The accompanying maps, drawn by Hal Jackson, show the expedition's route and approximate locations of Pike's camps. In addition to the journal entries for the time Pike was in present Kansas and Nebraska, also reprinted here are Pike's instructions for the expedition (contained in two letters from General James Wilkinson), which provide the expedition's scope and purposes, and excerpts from Pike's report (an appendix to his journal) that refer to present Kansas.

PIKE'S INSTRUCTIONS: TWO LETTERS FROM GENERAL JAMES WILKINSON

Letter, Gen. James Wilkinson to Lt. Z. M. Pike, St. Louis, June 24th, 1806.³

Sir,

YOU are to proceed without delay to the cantonment on the Missouri, where you are to embark the late Osage captives, and the deputation recently returned from Washington, with their presents and baggage, and are to transport the whole up the Missouri and Osage rivers to the town of the Grand Osage.

The safe delivery of this charge at the point of destination, constitutes the primary object of your expedition, and therefore you are to move with such caution as may prevent surprise from any hostile band, and are to repel with your utmost force any outrage which may be attempted.

Having safely deposited your passengers and their property, you are to turn your attention to the accomplishment of a permanent peace between the Kanes and Osage nations, for which purpose you must effect a meeting between the head chiefs of those nations, and are to employ such arguments, deduced from their own obvious interests, as well as the inclinations, desires, and commands of the president of the United States, as may facilitate your purpose and accomplish the end.

A third object of considerable magnitude will then claim your consideration. It is to effect an interview and establish a good understanding with the Yanctons, Tetaus, or Camanches.⁴ For this purpose you must interest White Hair,

3. Pike, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi*, 107–9.

4. All these names—Yanctons, Tetaus, and Camanches—refer to the Comanches.



General James Wilkinson (above) authorized Lieutenant Pike to explore the southwestern portion of the Louisiana Purchase.

of the Grand Osage, with whom and a suitable deputation you will visit the Panis [Pawnee] republic, where you may find interpreters, and inform yourself of the most feasible plan, by which to bring the Camanches to a conference.— Should you succeed in this attempt (and no pains must be spared to effect it), you will endeavor to make peace between that distant powerful nation, and the nations which inhabit the country between us and them, particularly the Osage; and finally you will endeavor to induce eight or ten of their distinguished chiefs, to make a visit to the seat of government next September, and you may attach to this deputation four or five Panis, and the same number of Kansas chiefs. As your interview with the Camanches will probably lead you to the head branches of the Arkansaw and Red rivers, you may find yourself approximated to the settlements of New Mexico, and there it will be necessary you should move with great circumspection, to keep clear of any hunting or reconnoitering parties from that province, and to prevent alarm or offence; because the affairs of Spain and the United States, appear to be on the point of amicable adjustment, and moreover it is the desire of the president, to cultivate the friendship and harmonious intercourse of all the nations of the earth, and particularly our near neighbors the Spaniards.

In the course of your tour, you are to remark particularly upon the geographical structure, the natural history and population of the country through which you may pass, taking particular care to collect and preserve specimens of every thing curious in the mineral or botanical worlds, which can be preserved and are portable. Let your courses be regulated by your compass, and your distances by your watch, to be noted in a field-book, and I would advise you when circumstances permit, to protract and lay down in a separate book the march of the day at every evening's halt.

The instruments, which I have furnished you, will enable you to ascertain the variation of the magnetic needle and the latitude with exactitude; and at every remarkable point, I wish you to employ your telescope in observing the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites, having previous regulated and adjusted your watch by your quadrant, taking care to note with great nicety the periods of immersions and emersions of the eclipsed satellites. These observations may enable us after your return, by application to the appropriate tables, which I cannot now furnish you, to ascertain the longitude.

It is an object of much interest with the executive, to ascertain the direction, extent, and navigation of the Arkansaw and Red river, as far, therefore, as may be compatible with these instructions and practicable to the means you may command. I wish you to carry your views to those subjects, and should circumstances conspire to favor the enterprise, that you may detach a party with a few Osage to descent the Arkansaw under the orders of lieutenant Wilkinson, or sergeant Ballinger, properly instructed and equipped to take the courses and distances, to remark on the soil, timber, &c &c. and to note the tributary streams. This party will, after reaching our post on the Arkansaw, descent to fort Adams and there wait further orders; and you yourself may descend the Red river accompanied by a party of the most respectable Camanches to the post of Nachitoches, and there receive further orders.

To disburse your necessary expences and to aid your negotiations, you are herewith furnished six hundred dollars worth of goods, for the appropriation of which you are to render a strict account, vouched by documents to be attested by one of your party.

Wishing you a safe and successful expedition,

I am, sir,

With much respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) James Wilkinson.

Letter, Gen. James Wilkinson to Lt. Z. M. Pike, Cantonment, Missouri, July 12th, 1806.⁵

Sir,

THE health of the Osages being now generally restored, and all hopes of the speedy recovery of their prisoners, from the hands of the Potowatomies, being at an end, they have become desirous to commence their journey for their villages, you are therefore to proceed to-morrow.

In addition to the instructions given you on the 24th ultimo, I must request you to have the talks under cover delivered to White Hair and the Grande Peste, the chief of the Osage band, which is settled on the waters of the Arkansas, together with the belts which accompany them. You will also receive herewith a small belt for the Panis and a large one for the Tetaus or Camanches.

Should you find it necessary, you are to give orders to Maugraine the resident interpreter at the Grand Osage to attend you.

I beg you to take measures for the security and safe return of your boats from the Grand Osage to this place.

Doctor [John H.] Robinson will accompany you as a volunteer. He will be furnished medicines, and for the accommodations which you give him, he is bound to attend your sick.

Should you discover any unlicensed traders in your route, or any person from this territory, or from the United States, without a proper licence or passport, you are to arrest such person or persons and dispose of their property as the law directs.

My confidence in your caution and discretion, has prevented my urging you to be vigilant in guarding against the stratagems and treachery of the Indians, holding yourself above alarm or surprise, the composition of your party, though it be small, will secure to you the respect of an host of untutored savages.

You are to communicate from the Grand Osage and from every other practicable point, directly to the secretary of war, transmitting your letters to this place under cover, to the commanding officer, or by any more convenient route.

I wish you health and a successful and honorable enterprise, and am,
Yours with friendship.
(Signed) James Wilkinson.

5. Pike, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi*, 109–10.



Pawhuska, or White Hair (above), chief of the Great Osages, is mentioned in Wilkinson's letter of July 12, 1806. Pike and his party would encounter White Hair in present Missouri, August 1806.

PIKE'S JOURNAL, SEPTEMBER 3–NOVEMBER 11, 1806

3d September, Wednesday.—Rose early, and went to the Little [Osage] Village to breakfast. After giving my letters to Mr. [George] Henry,⁶ and arranging my affairs, we proceeded, and overtook our party at two o'clock. They had left their first camp about four miles. Our horses being much fatigued, we concluded to remain all night. Sent out our red and white hunters, all of whom only killed two turkies. Distance 4 miles.

4th September, Thursday.—When about to march in the morning, one of our horses was missing, and we left Sans Oreille [*sic*],⁷ with the two Pawnees, to search for him, and proceeded till about nine o'clock; then stopped until twelve o'clock, and then marched. In about half an hour was overtaken and informed that Sans Oreille had not

6. George Henry, a civilian, joined the expedition as a volunteer at St. Charles, Missouri, on July 17, and he left the expedition on September 3, because of a shortage of horses, to return to St. Louis and carry communications. See Jackson, *The Journals of Zebulon Montgomery Pike*, 1:291, 313; 2:119.

7. Sans Oreilles (No Ears) was the son of Osage Chief White Hair. See *ibid.*, 1:296n.

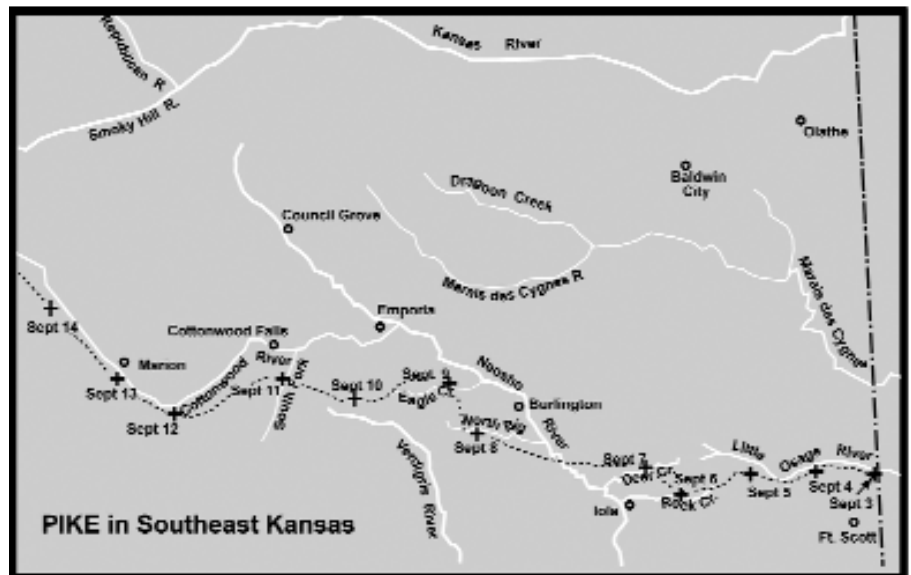
been able to find our horse; on which we encamped, and sent two horses back for the load. One of the Indians, being jealous of his wife, sent her back to the village. After making the necessary notes, Dr. Robinson and myself took our horses and followed the course of the little stream, until we arrived at the Grand river, which was distant about six miles. We here found a most delightful bason of clear water, of 25 paces diameter and about 100 in circumference, in which we bathed; found it deep and delightfully pleasant. Nature scarcely ever formed a more beautiful place for a farm. We returned to camp about dusk, when I was informed that some of the Indians had been *dreaming* and wished to return. Killed one deer, one turkey, one raccoon. Distance 13 miles.

5th September, Friday.—In the morning our Little Osage all came to a determination to return, and, much to my surprise, Sans Oreille amongst the rest! I had given an order on the chiefs for the lost horse to be delivered to Sans Oreille's wife, previously to my knowing that he was going back, but took from him his gun, and the guns from all the others also. In about five miles we struck a beautiful hill, which bears south

on the prairie: its elevation I suppose to be 100 feet. From its summit the view is sublime to the east and south-east. We waited on this hill to breakfast, and had to send two miles for water. Killed a deer on the rise, which was soon roasting before the fire. Here another Indian wished to return and take his horse with him, which, as we had so few, I could not allow, for he had already received a gun for the use of his horse. I told



him he might return, but his horse would go to the Pawnees. We marched, leaving the Osage trace, which we had hitherto followed, and crossed the hills to a creek which was almost dry. Descended it to the main river, where we dined. The discontented Indian came up, and put on an air of satisfaction and content. We again



marched about six miles further, and encamped at the head of a small creek, about half a mile from water. Distance 19 miles.

6th September, Saturday.—We marched at half past six o'clock, and arrived at a large fork of the little Osage river, where we breakfasted. In the holes in the creek we discovered many fish, which, from the stripes on their bellies, and their spots, I supposed to be trout and bass: they were twelve inches long. This brought to mind the necessity of a net, which would have frequently afforded subsistence to the whole party. We halted at one o'clock and remained until four o'clock. Being told that we could not arrive at any water, we here filled our vessels. At five o'clock arrived at the dividing ridge, between the waters of the Osage and Arkansas (alias White river), the dry branches of which interlock within 20 yards of each other. The prospect from the dividing ridge to the east and south-east is sublime. The prairie rising and falling in regular swells, as far as the sight can extend, produces a very beautiful appearance. We left our course, and struck down to the south-west on a small creek, or rather a puddle of water. Killed one deer. Distance 20 miles.

7th September, Sunday.—We left this at half past six o'clock, before which we had a difficulty with the son of the chief, which was accommodated. At nine o'clock we came on a large fork and stopped for breakfast. Proceeded on and encamped on a fine stream, where we swam our horses and bathed ourselves. Killed four deer. Distance 15 miles.

8th September, Monday.—Marched early, and arrived at a grand fork of the White river. The Indians were all discontented: we had taken the wrong ford; but, as they were

dispersed through the woods, we could not be governed by their movements. Previously to our leaving the camp, the son [unidentified] of the Cheveux Blanche [White Hair] proposed returning, and offered no other reason than that he felt too lazy to perform the route. The reason I offered to prevent his going was ineffectual, and he departed with his hunter, who deprived us of one horse. His return left us without any chief or man of consideration, except the son⁸ of the Belle Oiseau,⁹ who was but a lad. The former appeared to be a discontented young fellow, and filled with self pride: he certainly should have considered it as an honor to be sent on so respectable an embassy as he was. Another Indian, who owned one of our horses, wished to return with him, which was positively refused him; but fearing he might steal him, I contented him with a present. We marched, and made the second branch, crossing one prairie twelve miles, in which we suffered much with drought. Distance 22 miles.

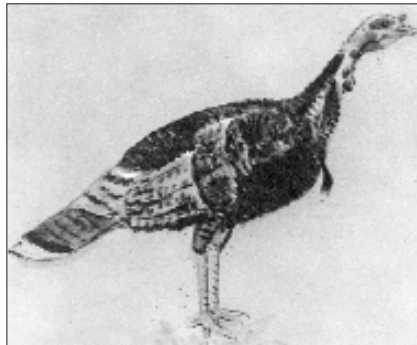
9th September, Tuesday.—Marched at seven o'clock, and struck a large creek at eleven miles distance. On holding a council, it was determined to ascend this creek to the highest point of water, and then strike across to a large river of the Arkansaw. We ascended four miles and a half, and encamped. Killed one cabrie [pronghorn], two deer, two turkeys. Distance 12 miles.

10th September, Wednesday.—Marched early. Struck and passed the divide between the *Grand* river and the Verdegris river.

Stopped to breakfast on a small stream of the latter; after which we marched and encamped on the fourth small stream. Killed one elk, one deer. Distance 21 miles.

11th September, Thursday.—Passed four branches and over high hilly prairies. Encamped at night on a large branch of Grand river. Killed one cabrie, one deer. Distance 17 miles.

12th September, Friday.—Commenced our march at



8. This "son" was not identified but possibly was Chingawassa or Handsome Bird. See *ibid.*, 1:316 n.61.

9. Belle Oiseau (Beautiful Bird) was an Osage Chief who was killed by the Sac Indians in 1804. See *ibid.*, 1:305 n.39.

seven o'clock. Passed very ruff flint hills. My feet blistered and very sore. I stood on a hill, and in one view below me saw buffalo, elk, deer, cabrie, and panthers. Encamped on the main branch of Grand river, which had very steep banks and was deep. Dr. Robinson, [Private Samuel] Bradley, and Baroney arrived after dusk, having killed three buffalo, which, with one I killed, and two by the Indians, made six; the Indians alledging it was the Kans' hunting-ground, therefore they would destroy all the game they possibly could. Distance 18 miles.

13th September, Saturday.—Late in marching, it having every appearance of rain. Halted to dine on a branch of Grand river. Marched again at half past two o'clock, and halted at five, intending to dispatch Dr. Robinson and one of our Pawnees to the [Pawnee] village to-morrow. Killed six buffalo, one elk, and three deer. Distance 9 miles.

14th September, Sunday.—The doctor and Frank (a young Pawnee) marched for the village at day-light; we at half past six o'clock. Halted at one o'clock. On the march we were continually passing through large herds of buffalo, elk, and cabrie; and I have no doubt but one hunter could support 200 men. I prevented the men shooting at the game, not merely because of the scarcity of ammunition, but, as I conceived, the laws of morality forbid it also. Encamped at sun-set on the main branch of White river hitherto called Grand river [Cottonwood River]. Killed one buffalo and one cabrie. Distance 21 miles.

15th September, Monday.—Marched at seven o'clock passed a very large Kans encampment, evacuated, which had been occupied last summer. Proceeded on to the dividing ridge, between the waters of the White river and the Kans.¹⁰ This ridge was covered with a layer of stone, which was strongly impregnated with iron ore, and on the west side of said ridge we found spa springs. Halted at one o'clock, very much against the inclination of the Osage, who, from the running of the buffalo, conceived a party of the Kans to be near. Killed two buffalo. Distance 18 miles.

16th September, Tuesday.—Marched late, and in about four miles and a half distance, came to a very handsome branch of water, at which we stopped and remained until after 2 o'clock, when we marched and crossed two branches. Encamped on the third. At the second creek a horse was discovered on the prairie, when Baroney went in pursuit of him on a horse of lieutenant [James B.] Wilkinson, but arrived at our camp without success. Dis-

10. This was the Smoky Hill branch of the Kansas River.

tance 13 miles.

17th September, Wednesday.—Marched early and struck the main south-east [southwest] branch of the Kans river [Smoky Hill]: at nine o'clock it appeared to be 25 or 30 yards wide, and is navigable in the flood seasons. We passed it six miles to a small branch to breakfast. Game getting scarce, our provision began to run low. Marched about two o'clock, and encamped at sun-down on a large branch. Killed one buffalo. Distance 21 miles.

18th September, Thursday.—Marched at our usual hour, and a twelve o'clock halted at a large branch of the Kans [Saline River], which was strongly impregnated with salt. This day we expected the people of the village to meet us. We marched again at four o'clock. Our route being over a continued series of hills and hollows, we were until eight

at night before we arrived at a small dry branch. It was nearly ten o'clock before we found any water. Commenced raining a little before day. Distance 25 miles.

19th September, Friday.—It having commenced raining early, we secured our baggage and pitched our tents. The rain continued without any intermis-

sion the whole day, during which we employed ourselves in reading the Bible, Pope's Essays, and in pricking on our arms with India ink *some characters*, which will frequently bring to mind our forlorn and dreary situation, as well as the happiest days of our life. In the rear of our encampment was a hill, on which there was a large rock, where the Indians kept a continual sentinel, as I imagine, to apprise them of the approach of any party, friends or foes, as well as to see if they could discover any game on the prairies.

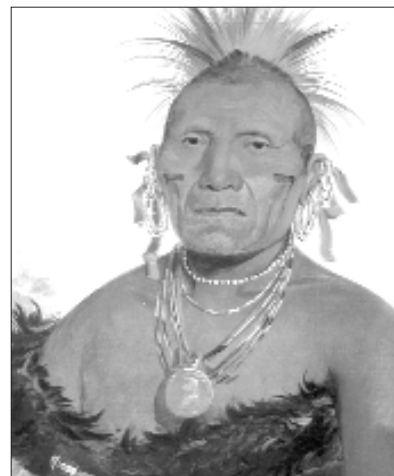
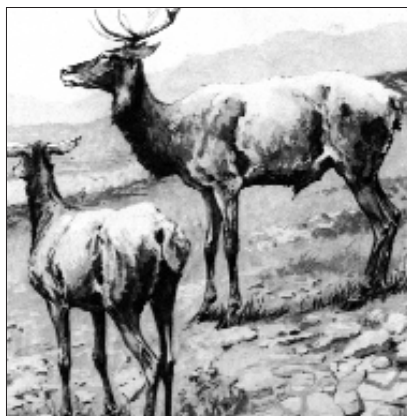
20th September, Saturday.—It appearing as if we possibly might have a clear day, I ordered our baggage spread abroad to dry; but it shortly after clouded up and commenced raining. The Osage sentinel discovered a buffalo on the prairies; upon which we dispatched a hunter on horseback in pursuit of him, also some hunters out on foot, and before night they killed three buffalo, some of the best of which we brought in and jerked or dried by the fire. It continued showery until afternoon, when we put our baggage again in position to dry, and remained encamped. The detention of the doctor and our Pawnee ambassador began to

be a serious matter of consideration.

21st September, Sunday.—We marched at eight o'clock although every appearance of rain, and at eleven o'clock passed a large creek remarkably salty. Stopped at one o'clock on a fresh branch of the salt creek. Our interpreter having killed an elk, we sent out for some meat, which detained us so late that I concluded it best to encamp where we were, in preference to running the risk of finding no water. Lieutenant Wilkinson was attacked with a severe head-ache and slight fever. One of my men had been attacked with a touch of the pleurisy on the 18th, and was still ill. We were informed by an Osage woman that two of the Indians were conspiring to desert us in the night, and steal some of our horses, one of whom was her husband. We engaged her as our spy. Thus were we obliged to keep ourselves on our guard against our own companions and fellow-travellers, men of a nation highly favored by the United States, but whom I believe to be a faithless set of poltrons, incapable of a great and generous action. Among them, indeed, there may be some exceptions.

In the evening, finding that the two Indians above mentioned had made all preparations to depart, I sent for one of them, who owned a horse and received a gun and other property for his hire, and told him, "I knew his plans, and that if he was disposed to desert, I should take care to retain his horse; that as for himself, he might leave me if he pleased, as I *only* wanted *men* with us." He replied, "that he was a *man*, that he always performed his promises, that he had never said he would return, but that he would follow me to the Pawnee village, which he intended to do." He then brought his baggage and put it under charge of the sentinel, and slept by my fire; but notwithstanding I had him well watched. Killed one elk. Distance 10 miles.

22d September, Monday.—We did not march until eight o'clock, owing to the indisposition of lieutenant Wilkinson. At eleven waited to dine. Light mists of rain, with flying clouds. We marched again at three o'clock, and continued our route twelve miles to the first branch of the republican fork. Met a Pawnee hunter, who informed us that the chief had left



the village the day after the doctor arrived, with 50 or 60 horses and many people, and had taken his course to the north of our route; consequently we had missed each other. He likewise informed that the Tetaus had recently killed six Pawnees, the Kans had stolen some horses, and that a party of 300 Spaniards had lately been as far as the Sabine; but for what purpose unknown. Distance 11 miles.

23d September, Tuesday. — Marched early and passed a large fork of the Kans river, which I suppose to be the one generally called Solomon's. One of our horses fell into the water and wet his load. Halted at ten o'clock on a branch of this fork. We marched at half past one o'clock, and encamped at sun-down, on a stream where we had a great difficulty to find water. We were over-taken by a Pawnee, who encamped with us. He offered his horse for our use. Distance 21 miles.

24th September, Wednesday. — We could not find our horses until late, when we marched. Before noon met Frank (who had accompanied Dr. Robinson to the village) and three other Pawnees, who informed us that the chief and his party had only arrived at the village yesterday, and had dispatched them out in search of us. Before three o'clock we were joined by several Pawnees: one of them wore a scarlet coat, with a small medal of general Washington, and a Spanish medal also. We encamped at sun-set on a middle sized branch, and were joined by several Pawnees in the evening, who brought us some buffalo meat. Here we saw some mules, horses, bridles and blankets, which they obtained of the Spaniards. Few only had *breech cloths*, most being wrapped in buffalo robes, otherwise quite naked. Distance 18 miles.

25th September, Thursday. — We marched at a good hour, and in about eight miles struck a very large road on which the Spanish troops returned and on which we could yet discover the grass beaten down in the direction which they went.

When we arrived within about three miles of the village, we were requested to remain, as the ceremony of receiving the Osage into the towns was to be performed here. There was a small circular spot, clear of grass, before which the Osage sat down. We were a small distance in advance of the Indians. The Pawnees then advanced to within a mile of us, and halted, divided into two troops, and came on each flank at full charge, making all the gestures and performing the manœuvres of a real war charge. They then encircled us around, and the chief advanced in the centre and gave us his hand: his name was *Characterish* [Sharitarish or White Wolf]. He was accompanied by his two sons and a

chief by the name of *Iskatappe* [Rich Man]. The Osage were still seated; but the Belle Oiseau then rose and came forward with a pipe, and presented it to the chief, who took a whiff or two from it. We then proceeded on: the chief, lieutenant Wilkinson and myself in front; my serjeant, on a white horse, next with the colors; then our horses and baggage, escorted by our men, with the Pawnees on each side, running races, &c. When we arrived on the hill over the town we were again halted, and the Osage seated in a row, when each Pawnee who intended so to do presented them with a horse, gave a pipe to smoke to the Osage to whom he had made the present. In this manner were eight horses given. Lieutenant Wilkinson then proceeded on with the party to the river above the town, and encamped. As the chief had invited us to his lodge to eat, we thought it proper for one to go. At the lodge he gave me many particulars



which were interesting to us, relative to the late visit of the Spaniards.¹¹ I went to our camp in the evening, having a young Pawnee with me loaded with corn for my men. Distance twelve miles.

26th September, Friday. — Finding our encampment not eligible as to situation, we moved down on to the prairie hill, about three-fourths of a mile nearer the village. We sent our interpreter to town to trade for provision. About three o'clock in the afternoon twelve Kans arrived at the village, and informed Baroney that they had come to

11. At this point Pike included a lengthy footnote, omitted here, about Spanish Lieutenant Facundo Melgares and his expedition, who visited the same Pawnee village a few weeks earlier.

meet us, hearing we were to be at the Pawnees village. We pitched our camp upon a beautiful eminence, from whence we had a view of the town, and all that was transacting. In the evening Baroney, with the chief, came to camp to give us the news, and returned together.

27th September, Saturday. — Baroney arrived from the village about one o'clock, with Characterish and three other chiefs, to all of whom we gave a dinner. I then made an appropriate present to each, after which lieutenant Wilkinson and myself accompanied them to town; where we remained a few hours, and returned. Appointed tomorrow for the interview with the Kans and Osage.

28th September, Sunday. — Held a council of the Kans and Osage, and made them smoke of the pipe of peace.



Two of the Kans agreed to accompany us. We received a visit from the chief of the village. Made an observation on an emersion of one of Jupiter's satellites.

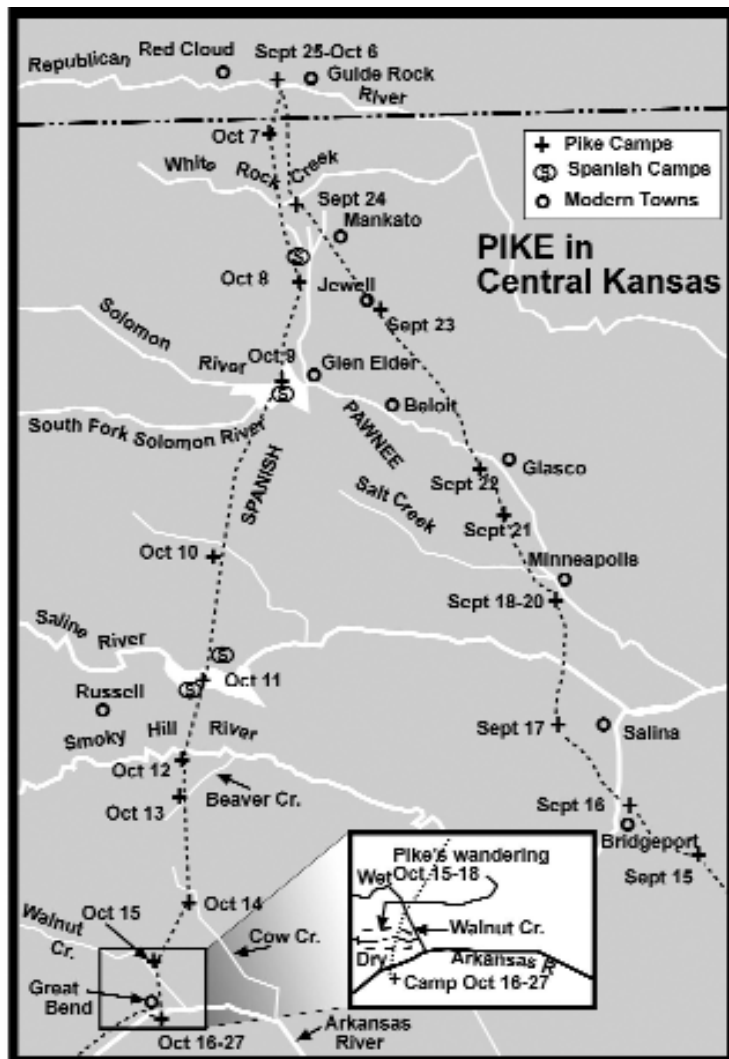
29th September, Monday. — Held our grand council with the Pawnees, at which were present not less than 400 warriors, the circumstances of which were extremely interesting. The notes I took on my grand council held with the Pawnee nation were seized by the Spanish government, together with all my speeches to

the different nations. But it may be interesting to observe here (in case they should never be returned) that the Spaniards had left several of their flags in the village; one of which was unfurled at the chief's door the day of the grand council, and that amongst various *demands* and *charges* I gave to them, was, that the said flag should be delivered to me, and one of the United States' flags be received and hoisted in its place. This probably was carrying the pride of nations a little too far, as there had so lately been a large force of Spanish cavalry at the village, which had made a great impression on the minds of the young men, as to their power, consequence, &c. which my appearance with 20 infantry was by no means calculated to remove. After the chiefs had replied to various parts of my

discourse, but were silent as to the flag, I again reiterated the demand for the flag, "adding that it was impossible for the nation to have two fathers; that they must either be the children of the Spaniards or acknowledge their American father." After a silence of some time, an old man rose, went to the door, and took down the Spanish flag, and brought it and laid it at my feet, and then received the American flag and elevated it on the staff, which had lately borne the standard of his Catholic majesty. This gave great satisfaction to the Osage and Kans, both of whom, decidedly avow themselves to be under the American protection. Perceiving that every face in the council was clouded with sorrow, as if some great national calamity was about to befall them, I took up the contested colors, and told them "that as they had now shewn themselves dutiful children in acknowledging their great American father, I did not wish to embarrass them with the Spaniards, for it was the wish of the Americans that their red brethren should remain peaceably around their own fires, and not embroil themselves in any disputes between the white people: and that for fear the Spaniards might return there in force again, I returned them their flag, but with an injunction that it should never be hoisted during our stay." At this there was a general shout of applause and the charge particularly attended to.

30 September, Tuesday. — Remained all day at the camp but sent Baroney to town, who informed me on his return that the chief appeared to wish to throw great obstacles in our way. A great disturbance had taken place in the village, owing to one of the young Pawnees who lately came from the United States, (Frank) having taken the wife of an Osage and ran away with her. The chief, in whose lodge the Osage put up, was extremely enraged, considering it a breach of hospitality to a person under his roof, and threatened to kill Frank if he caught him.

1st October, Wednesday. — Paid visit to town, and had a very long conversation with the chief, who urged every thing in his power to induce us to turn back. Finally, he very candidly told us that the Spaniards wished to have gone further into our country, but he induced them to give up the idea—that they had listened to him and he wished us to do the same—that he had promised the Spaniards to act as he now did, and that we must proceed no further, or he must stop us by force of arms. My reply was, "that I had been sent out by our *great father* to explore the western country, to visit all his red children, to make peace between them, and turn them from shedding blood; that he might see how I had caused the Osage and Kans to meet to



smoke the pipe of peace together, and take each other by the hands like brothers; that as yet my road had been smooth, and a blue sky over our heads. I had not seen any blood in our paths; but he must know that the young warriors of his *great American father* were not women to be turned back by *words*, that I should therefore proceed, and if he thought proper to stop me, he could attempt it; but we were *men*, well armed, and would *sell our own lives* at a dear rate to his nation—that we knew our *great father* would send our young warriors there to gather our bones and revenge our *deaths* on his people—when our spirits would rejoice in hearing our exploits sung in the war songs of our chiefs." I then left his lodge and returned to camp in considerable perturbation of mind.

2d October, Thursday.—We received advice from our Kans that the chief had given publicity to his idea of stopping us by force of arms, which gave serious reflections to me, and was productive of many singular expressions from

es but could not succeed. In the night we were alarmed by some savages coming near our camp in full speed, but they retreated equally rapidly, on being hailed with fierceness by our sentinels. This created some degree of indignation in my little band, as we had noticed that all the day had passed without any traders presenting themselves, which appeared as if all intercourse was interdicted!! Writing to the secretary at war, the general, &c.

3d October, Friday.—The intercourse again commenced. Traded for some horses. Writing for my express.

4th October, Saturday.—Two French traders arrived at the village in order to procure horses to transport their goods from the Missouri to the village. They gave us information that *captains Lewis and Clark*, with all their people, had descended the river to St. Louis; this diffused general joy through our party. Our trade for horses advanced none this day.

5th October, Sunday.—Buying horses. Preparing to march, and finishing my letters.

6th October, Monday.—Marched my express. Purchasing horses and preparing to march on the morrow.

7th October, Tuesday.—In the morning found two of our newly purchased horses missing. Sent in search of them: the Indians brought in one pretty early. Struck our tents and commenced loading our horses. Finding there was no probability of our obtaining the other lost one, we marched at two P. M. and as the chief had threatened to stop us by force of arms, we had made every arrangement to make him pay as dear for the attempt as possible. The party was kept compact, and marched on by a road round the village, in order that if attacked the savages would not have their houses to fly to for cover. I had given orders not to fire until within five or six paces, and then to charge with the bayonet and saber, when I believe it would have cost them at least 100 men to have exterminated us (which would have been necessary) the village appeared all to be in motion. I galloped up to the lodge of the chief, attended by my interpreter and one soldier, but soon saw there was no serious attempt to be made, although many young men were walking about with their bows, arrows, guns and lances. After speaking to the chief with apparent indifference, I told him that I calculated on his justice in obtaining the horse, and that I should leave a man until the next day at 12 o'clock to bring him out. We then joined the party and pursued our route: when I was once on the summit of the hill which overlooks the village, I felt my mind relieved from a heavy burden; yet all the evil I wished the *Pawnees* was that I might be the instrument in the hands of our government, to open their *ears*

and eyes with a *strong hand*, to convince them of our power. Our party now consisted of two officers, one doctor, 18 soldiers, one interpreter, three Osage men and one woman, making 25 warriors. We marched out and encamped on a small branch, distant seven miles, on the same route we came in. Rain in the night.

8th October, Wednesday.—I conceived it best to send Baroney back to the village with a present, to be offered for our horse, the chief having suggested the propriety of the measure; he met his son and the horse with [Private John] Sparks. Marched at ten o'clock, and at four o'clock came to the place where the Spanish troops encamped the first night they left the Pawnee village. Their encampment was circular, and having only small fires round the circle to cook by. We counted 59 fires; now if we allow six men to each fire, they must have been 354 in number. We camped on a large branch of the second fork on the Kans river. Distance 18 miles.

9th October, Thursday.—Marched at eight o'clock, being detained until that time by our horses being at a great distance. At eleven o'clock we found the forks of the Spanish and Pawnee roads, and when we halted at twelve o'clock, we were overtaken by the second chief (or Iskatappe) and the American chief with one-third of the village. They presented us with a piece of bear meat. When we were about to march, we discovered that the dirk of the doctor had been stolen from behind his saddle; after marching the men the doctor and myself, with the interpreter, went to the chief and "demanded that he should cause a search to be made;" it was done, but when the dirk was found, the possessor asserted that he had found it on the road; I told him "that he did not speak the truth," and informed the chief that we never suffered a thing of ever so little value to be taken without liberty. At this time the prairie was covered with his men, who began to encircle us around, and lieutenant Wilkinson with the troops had gained half a mile on the road. The Indian demanded a knife before he would give it up; but as we refused to give any, the chief took one from his belt and gave it to him, took the dirk and presented it to the doctor, who immediately returned it to the chief as a present, and desired Baroney to inform him he now saw it was not the value of the *article* but the *act* we despise, and then galloped off. In about a mile we discovered a herd of elk which we pursued; they took back in sight of the Pawnees, who immediately mounted 50 or 60 young men and joined in the pursuit; then for the first time in my life, I saw animals slaughtered by true savages, with their original weapons, bows and arrows; they buried the arrow up to the plume in the animal. We took a piece of meat and pursued

our party; we overtook them and encamped within the Grand or Solomon Fork, which we crossed on the 23d September, (lower down) on our route to the Pawnees. This was the Spanish camping ground. In the evening two Pawnees came to our camp, who had not eaten for three days; two of which they had carried a sick companion whom they had left that day; we gave them supper, some meat and corn, and they immediately departed in order to carry their sick companion this seasonable supply. When they were coming into camp, the sentinel challenged, it being dark; they immediately (on seeing him bring his piece to the charge) supposing he was about to fire on them, advanced to give him their hands, he, however, not well discerning their motions, was on the point of firing, but being a cool collected little fellow, called out that there were two Indians advancing on him, and if he should fire; this brought out the guard, when the poor affrighted savages were brought into camp, very much alarmed, for they

had not heard of a white man's being within their country, and thought they were entering one of the camps of their own people. Distance 18 miles.



10 October, Friday.—Marched at seven o'clock and halted at twelve o'clock to dine. Were overtaken by the Pawnee chiefs, whose party we left the day before; who informed us the hunting party had taken another road, and that he had come to bid us good by. We left a large ridge on our left, and at sun down crossed it. From this place we had an extensive view of the southwest: we observed a creek at a distance, for which I meant to proceed. The doctor, interpreter, and myself, arrived at eight o'clock at night;

found water and wood, but had nothing to eat. Kindled a fire in order to guide the party, but they not being able to find the route, and not knowing the distance, encamped on the prairie without wood or water.

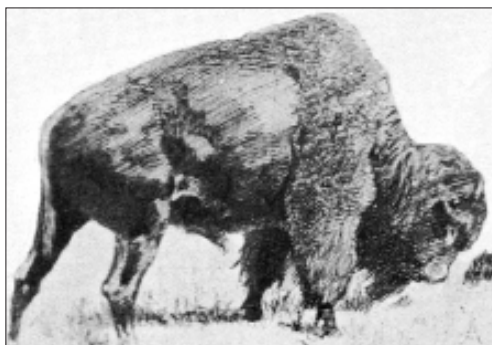
11th October, Saturday.—Ordered Baroney to return to find the party and conduct them to our camp. The doctor and myself went out to hunt, and on our return found all our people had arrived, except the rear guard, which was in sight. Whilst we halted five Pawnees came to our

camp and brought some bones of a *horse* which the Spanish troops had been obliged to eat, at their encampment on this creek; we took up our line of march at twelve o'clock, and at sun-down the party halted on the saline. I was in pursuit of buffalo and did not make the camp until near ten o'clock at night. Killed one buffalo. Distance 12 miles.

12th October, Sunday.—Here the Belle Oiseau and one Osage left us, and there remained only one man and woman of that nation—their reason for leaving us was that our course bore too much west, and they desired to bear more for the hunting ground of the Osage. In the morning sent out to obtain the buffalo meat, and laid by until after breakfast. Proceeded at eleven o'clock, and crossing the river two or three times, we passed two camps where the Spanish troops had halted. Here they appeared to have remained some days, their roads being so much blended with the traces of the buffalo that we lost them entirely. This was a mortifying stroke, as we had reason to calculate, that they had good guides, and were on the best route for wood and water. We took a south-west direction, and before night, were fortunate enough to strike their roads on the left, and at dusk, much to our surprise, struck the east fork of the Kans or La Touche de la Cote Bucanieus [Smoky Hill River]. Killed one buffalo. Distance 18 miles.

13th October, Monday.—The day being rainy, we did not march until two o'clock, when it having an appearance of clearing off, we raised our camp, after which we marched seven miles and encamped on the head of a branch of the river we left. Had to go two miles for water. Killed one cabrie.

14th October, Tuesday.—It having drizzled rain all night, and the atmosphere being entirely obscured, we did not march until a quarter past nine o'clock, and commenced crossing the dividing ridge between the Kans and Arkansaw rivers. Arrived on a branch of the latter at one o'clock; continued down it in search of water, until after dusk, when we found a pond on the prairie, which induced us to halt. Sparks did not come up, being scarcely able to walk with rheumatic pains. Wounded several buffalo, but could get none of them. Distance 24 miles.



15th October, Wednesday.—In the morning road out in search of the south trace, and crossed the low prairie, which was nearly all covered with ponds [Cheyenne Bottoms], but could not discover it. Finding Sparks did not arrive, sent two men in search of him, who arrived with him about eleven o'clock. At twelve o'clock we commenced our line of march, and at five o'clock, Dr. Robinson and myself left the party at a large creek (having pointed out a distant wood to lieutenant Wilkinson for our encampment) in order to search some distance up it for the Spanish trace. Killed two buffalo and left part of our clothing with them to scare away the wolves. Went in pursuit of the party. On our arrival at the creek appointed for the encampment, did not find them. Proceeded down it for some miles, and not finding them, encamped, struck fire, and then supped on one of our buffalo tongues.



16th October, Thursday.—Early on horseback; proceeded up the creek some distance in search of our party, but at twelve o'clock crossed to our two buffaloes; found a great many wolves at them, notwithstanding the precaution taken to keep them off. Cooked some marrow bones and again mounted our horses, and proceeded down the creek to their junction. Finding nothing of the party, I began to be seriously alarmed for their safety. Killed two more buffalo, made our encampment and feasted sumptuously on the marrow-bones. Rain in the night.

17th October, Friday.—Rose early, determining to search the creek to its source. Very hard rain, accompanied by a cold north-west all day. Encamped near night without being able to discover any signs of the party. Our sensations now became excruciating, not only for their personal safety, but the fear of the failure of the national objects intended to be accomplished by the expedition; and our own situation was not the most agreeable, not having more than four rounds of ammunition each, and 400 miles in the nearest direction from the first civilized inhabitant; we, however, concluded to search for them on the morrow, and if we did not succeed in finding them, to strike the Arkansaw, where we were in hopes to discover some traces, if not cut off by the savages.

18th October, Saturday. — Commenced our route at a good time, and about ten o'clock, discovered two men on horse-back in search of us, (one my waiter;) they informed us the party was encamped on the Arkansaw, about three miles south of where we then were: this surprised us very much as we had no conception of that river being so near. On our arrival were met by lieutenant Wilkinson, who with all the party was greatly concerned for our safety. The Arkansaw, on the party's arrival, had not water in it six inches deep, and the stream was not more than 20 feet wide, but the rain of the two days covered all the bottom of the river, which in this place is 450 yards from bank to bank, which are not more than four feet in height, bordered by a few cotton-wood trees on the north side by a low swampy prairie, on the south by a sandy sterile desert at a small distance. In the afternoon the doctor and myself took our horses and crossed the Arkansaw, in order to search for some trees which might answer the purpose to make canoes; found but one and returned at dusk. It commenced raining at 12 o'clock at night.

19th October, Sunday. — Finding the river rising rapidly, I thought it best to secure our passage over, we consequently made it good by ten o'clock, A. M. Rain all day. Preparing our tools and arms for labor and the chase on the morrow.

20th October, Monday. — Commenced our labor at two trees for canoes, but one proved too much doated. Killed two buffalo and one cabrie. Discharged our guns at a mark, the best shot a prize of one tent and a pair of shoes. Our only dog, was standing at the root of the tree, in the grass, and one of the balls, struck him on the head and killed him. Ceased raining about 12 o'clock.

21st October, Tuesday. — Doctor Robinson and myself mounted our horses, in order to go down the river to the entrance of the three last creeks, we had crossed on our rout, but meeting with buffalo, we killed four; also, one cabrie. Returned to camp and sent for the meat.

22d October, Wednesday. — Having sat up very late last evening, expecting the sergeant, and party (who did not arrive) we were very anxious for them, but about 10 o'clock Bradley arrived and informed us, that they could not find the buffalo, which we had killed on the prairie,

they all arrived before noon, and in the afternoon we scaffolded some meat and nearly compleated the frame of a skin Canoe, which we concluded to build; overhauled my instruments and made some rectifications preparatory to taking an observation &c.

23d October, Thursday. — Dr. Robinson and myself, accompanied by one man, ascended the river with an intention of searching the Spanish trace; at the same time, we dispatched *Baroney* and our two hunters to kill some buffalo, to obtain the skins for canoes. We ascended the river, about 20 miles to a large branch on the right; just at dusk gave chase to a buffalo and was obliged to shoot nineteen balls into him, before we killed him. Encamped in the fork.

24 October, Friday. — We assended the right branch about five miles, but could not see any sign of the Spanish trace; this is not surprising, as the river bears south west, and they no doubt kept more to the west from the head of one branch to another. We returned and on our way, killed some prairie squirrels, or wishtonwishes, and nine large rattle snakes, which frequent their villages.¹² On our arrival, found the hunters had come in a boat, one hour, with two buffalo and one elk skin.

25th October, Saturday. — Took an observation, passed the day in writing, and preparing for the departure of Lt. Wilkinson.

26th October, Sunday. — Delivered out a ration of corn by way of distinction of the Sabbath. Preparing for our departure.

27th October, Monday. — Delivered to lieutenant Wilkinson, letters for the general and our friends, with other papers, consisting of his instructions, tra-

verse tables of our voyage and a draught of our route, to that place complete; in order that if we were lost, and he arrived in safety; we might not have made the tour, without benefit to our country. He took with him in corn and meat, 21 days provisions and all the necessary tools, to build canoes or cabbins. Launched his canoes. We concluded, we would separate in the morning. He to descend and we to ascend to the mountains.

28th October, Tuesday. — As soon as possible, all was in motion, my party crossing the river to the north side,



12. Pike's lengthy footnote about prairie dogs is omitted here.

and lieutenant Wilkinson, launching his canoes of skins and wood. We breakfasted together, and then filed off; but I suffered my party to march, and I remained to see lieutenant Wilkinson sail, which he did at ten o'clock, having one skin canoe, made of four buffalo skins and two elk skins; this held three men besides himself and one Osage. In his wooden canoe, were, one soldier, one Osage and their baggage; one other soldier marched on shore. We parted with "God bless you" from both parties; they appeared to sail very well. In the pursuit of our party, Doctor Robinson, Baroney, one soldier and myself, killed a brelau [badger] and a buffalo, of the latter we took only his marrow bones and liver. Arrived where our men had encamped, about dusk. Distance 14 miles.



29th October, Wednesday.—Marched after breakfast and in the first hours march, passed two fires, where twenty one Indians had recently encamped, in which party (by their paintings on the rocks,) there were seven guns. Killed a buffalo, halted, made fire and feasted on the choice pieces of meat. About noon discovered two horses feeding with a herd of buffalo; we attempted to surround them, but they soon cleared our fleetest coursers. One appeared to be an elegant horse; these were the first wild horses we had seen. Two or three hours before night, struck the Spanish road; and, as it was snowing, halted and encamped the party, at the first woods on the bank of the river. The doctor and myself then forded it (the ice running very thick) in order to discover the course the Spaniards took, but owing to the many buffalo roads, could not ascertain it; but it evidently appeared that they had halted here some time, as the ground was covered with horse dung, for miles around. Returned to camp. The snow fell about two inches deep and then it cleared up. Distance 12 miles.

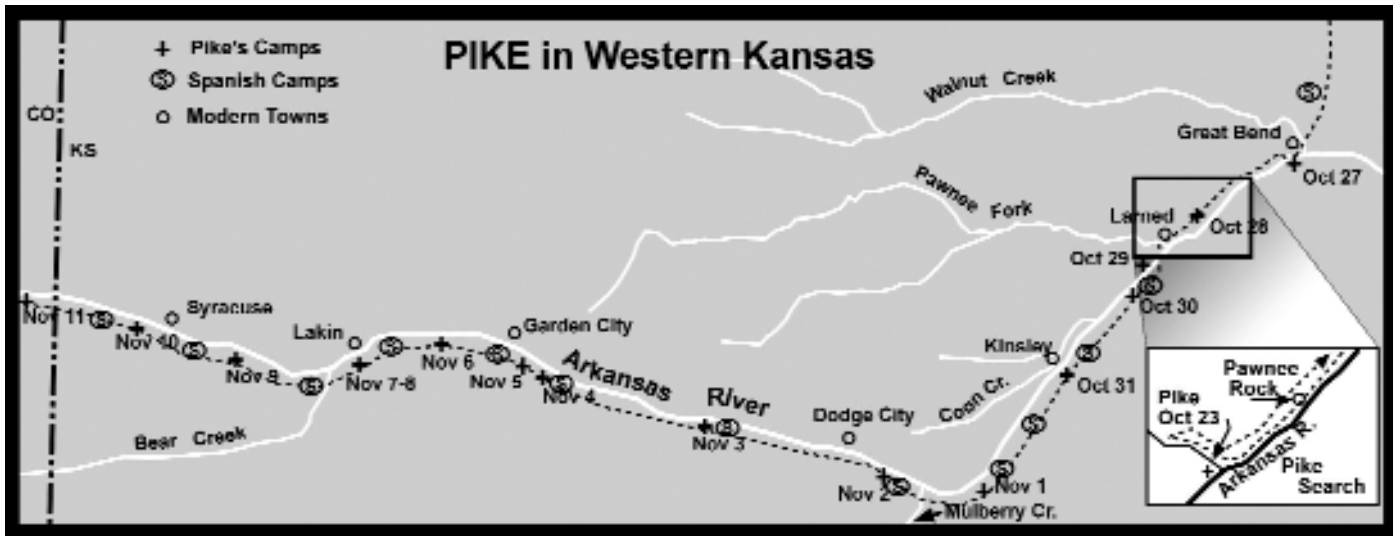
30th October, Thursday.—In the morning sent out to kill buffalo, to have his marrow bones for breakfast, which was accomplished; after breakfast the party marched upon the north side, and the doctor and myself crossed with considerable difficulty (on account of the ice) to the Spanish camp, where we took a large circuit in order to discover the Spanish trace and came in at a point of woods; south of the

river, where we found our party encamped. We discovered also that the Spanish troops had marked the river up, and that a party of savages had been there not more than three days before. Killed one buffalo. Distance 4 miles.

31st October, Friday.—Fine day—marched at three quarters past nine o'clock, on the Spanish road. Encamped, sun an hour high, after having made sixteen miles. We observed this day a species of chrystilization on the road (when the sun was high) in low places where there had been water settled, on tasting it found it to be salt; this gave in my mind some authenticity to the report of the prairie being covered for leagues. Discovered the trace of about twenty savages who had followed our road; and horses going down the river. Killed one buffalo, one elk, one deer.

1st November, Saturday.—Marched early, just after commencing our line, heard a gun on our left; the doctor, Baroney and myself being in advance, and laying on the ground waiting for the party; a band of Cabrie came up, amongst our horses, to satisfy their curiosity; we could not resist the temptation of killing two, although we had plenty of meat. At the report of the gun they appeared astonished, and stood still until we hallowed at them to drive them away. Encamped in the evening on an island, upon using my glass to observe the adjacent country, I observed on the prairie a herd of horses; doctor Robinson and Baroney, accompanied me to go and view them; when within a quarter of a mile, they discovered us, and came immediately up near us, making the earth tremble under them (this brought to my recollection a charge of cavalry). They stopt and gave us an opportunity to view them, among them there were some very beautiful bays, blacks and greys, and indeed of all colours. We fired at a black horse, with an idea of creasing him, but did not succeed; they flourished round and returned again to see us, when we returned to camp.

2d November, Sunday.—In the morning for the purpose of trying the experiment, we equipped six of our fleetest coursers with riders and ropes, to noose the wild horses if in our power, to come among the band. They stood until they came within forty yards of them, neighing and whinnowing, when the chase began, which we continued about two miles, without success. Two of our horses ran up with them; we could not take them. Returned to camp. I have since laughed at our folly, for taking the wild horses, in that manner, is scarcely ever attempted, even



with the fleetest horses, and most expert ropers, (see my account of wild horses, and the manner of taking them in my dissertations on the province of Texas). Marched late. River turned to north by west. Hills change to the north side. Distance 13 1-2 miles. Killed one buffalo.

3d November, Monday.—Marched at ten o'clock passed numerous herds of buffalo, elk, some horses &c. all travelling south. The river bottoms, full of salt ponds; grass similar to our salt meadows. Killed one buffalo. Distance 25 1-2 miles.

4th November, Tuesday.—This day brought to our recollection, the fate of our countrymen at Recovery; when defeated by the Indians, in the year '91. In the afternoon discovered the north side of the river to be covered with animals; which, when we came to them proved to be buffalo cows and calves. I do not think it an exaggeration to say there were 3,000 in one view. It is worthy of remark, that in all the extent of country yet crossed, we never saw one cow, and that now the face of the earth appeared to be covered with them. Killed one buffalo. Distance 24 1-2 miles.

5th November, Wednesday.—Marched at our usual hour; at the end of two miles, shot a buffalo and two deer and halted, which detained us so long that we foolishly concluded to halt the day and kill some cows and calves, which lay on the opposite side of the river. I took post on a hill, and sent some horsemen over, when a scene took place which gave a lively representation of an engagement. The herd of buffalo being divided into separate bands covered the prairie with dust, and first charged on the one side then to the other, as the pursuit of the horsemen impelled them: the report and smoke from the guns, added to the pleasure of the scene, which in part compensated for our detention.

6th November, Thursday.—Marched early, but was detained two or three hours by the cows, which we killed. The cow buffalo, was equal to any meat I ever saw, and we feasted sumptuously on the choice morsels. I will not attempt to describe the droves of animals we now saw on our route; suffice it to say, that the face of the prairie was covered with them, on each side of the river; their numbers exceeded imagination. Distance 16 miles.

7th November, Friday.—Marched early. The herbage being very poor, concluded to lay by on the morrow, in order to recruit our horses, killed three cow buffalo, one calf, two wolves, one brelaw. Distance 18 miles.

8th November, Saturday.—Our horses being very much jaded and our situation very eligible, we halted all day, jerked meat, mended mockinsons &c.

9th November, Sunday.—Marched early. At twelve o'clock, struck the Spanish road, (which had been on the outside of us) which appeared to be considerably augmented, and on our arrival, at the camp, found it to consist of 96 fires, from which a reasonable conclusion might be drawn, that there were from 6 to 700 men. We this day found the face of the country considerable changed; being hilly, with springs; passed numerous herds of buffalo and some horses. Distance 27 miles.

10th November, Monday.—The hills increased, the banks of the river, covered with groves of young cotton wood; the river itself much narrower and crooked. Our horses growing weak, two gave out, being then along empty, cut down trees at night, for them to browse on. Killed one buffalo. Distance 20 miles.

11th November, Tuesday.—Marched at the usual hour. Passed two old, and one last summer, camps which had belonged to the savages, and we suppose Tetaus [Co-

manches]. Passed a Spanish camp where it appeared they remained some days as we conjectured to lay up meat, previously to entering the Tetau country, as the buffalo evidently began to grow much less numerous. Finding the impossibility of performing the voyage in the time proposed, I determined to spare no pains to accomplish every object even should it oblige me to spend another winter, in the desert. Killed one buffalo. Distance 24 miles.

PIKE'S REPORT ON KANSAS AREA¹³

The country round the Osage villages [at the western edge of present Missouri], is one of the most beautiful the eye ever beheld. The three branches of the river, viz: the large east fork, the middle one (up which we ascended,) and the northern one, all winding round and past the villages, giving the advantages of wood and water—and at the same time, the extensive prairies crowned with rich and luxuriant grass and flowers—gently diversified by the rising swells, and sloping lawns—presenting to the warm imagination the future seats of husbandry, the numerous herds of domestic animals, which are no doubt destined to crown with joy those happy plains. The best comment I can make on the navigation of the Osage river, is a reference to my chart and journal on that subject. From the last village on the Missouri to the prairies on the Osage river, we found plenty of deer, bear, and some turkeys. From thence to the towns, there are some elk and deer, but near the villages they become scarce.

From the Osage towns to the source of the Osage river, there is no difference in the appearance of the country, except that on the south and east, the view on the prairies becomes unbounded, and is only limited by the imbecility of our sight. The waters of the White river and the Osage, are divided merely by a small ridge in the prairie, and the dry branches appear to interlock at their head. From thence to



the main branch of said river, the country appeared high and gravelly ridges of prairie land. On the main White river is large timber and fine ground for cultivation. . . .

Up this river to the dividing ridges, between it and the Verdigrise river, the bottom is of some magnitude and importance, but the latter river is bounded here in a narrow bed of prairie hills, affording not more than sufficient timber for fire wood for a limited number of inhabitants for a few years. From the Verdigrise, our course again lay over the gravelly hills and a prairie country, but well watered by the branches of the Verdigrise and White rivers (alias Grand river). From this point to the source of White river, there is very little timber, the grass short, prairies high and dry. From the head of White river over the dividing ridge between that and the Eastern branch of the Kans river, the ridge is high, dry, and has many appearances of iron ore, and on the West side some spaw springs—Here the country is very deficient of water, from the East Branch of the Kans river (by our route) to the Pawnee republic on the republican fork, (see chart) the prairies are low, high grass, and the country abounds with salines, and the earth appears to be impregnated with nitrous and common salts. The immediate border of the republican fork near the village is high ridges, but this an exception to the general face of the country. All the country, between the forks of the Kans river, a distance of 160 miles, may be called prairie, notwithstanding the borders of wood land which ornament the banks of those



streams, but are no more than a line traced on a sheet of paper, when compared to the immense tract of meadow country.

For some distance from the Osage villages, you only find deer, then elk, then cabrie [pronghorn] and finally buffalo. But it is worthy of remark, that although the male buffalo were in great abundance, yet in all our route from the Osage to the Pawnees we never saw one female. I acknowledge myself at a loss to determine,

whether this is to be attributed to the decided preference the savages give to the meat of the female; and that conse-

13. These excerpts relating to the area of Kansas are from Pike, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi*, appendix to part 2, 3–8. Omissions are indicated by ellipses.

quently they are almost exterminated in the hunting grounds of the nations—or to some physical causes, for I afterwards discovered the females with young in such immense herds, as gave me no reason to believe, they yielded to the males in numbers. From the Pawnee town on the Kanzas river, to the Arkansaw, the country may almost be termed mountainous, but want of timber gives the hills



less claim to the appellation of mountains. They are watered and created as it were by the various branches of the Kanzas river. One of those branches, a stream of considerable magnitude (say 20 yards) which I have designated on the chart by the name of the Saline—was so salt[y] at where we crossed it, on our route to the Arkansaw, that it

salted sufficiently, the soup of the meat which my men boiled in it. We were here, very eligibly situated, had a fresh spring, issuing from a bank near us; plenty of the necessaries of life all around, viz: buffalo; a beautiful little sugar loaf hill, for a look out post; fine grass for our horses; and a saline in front of us. As you approach the Arkansaw (on this route) within 15 or 20 miles the country appears to be low and swampy; or the land is covered with ponds extending out from the river some distance. The river at the place where I struck it, is nearly 500 yards wide, from bank to bank. Those banks not more than four feet high, thinly covered with cotton wood. The north side a swampy low prairie, and the south a sandy sterile desert. From thence, about half way to the mountains, the country continued the low prairie hills, with scarcely any streams putting into the river; and on the bottom many bare spots, on which when the sun is in the meridian, is congealed a species of salt, sufficiently thick to be accumulated, but it is so strongly impregnated with nitric qualities, as to render it unfit for use until purified. The grass in this district on the river bottoms, has a great appearance of the grass on our salt marshes. From the first south fork (see chart) the borders of the river have more wood, and the hills are

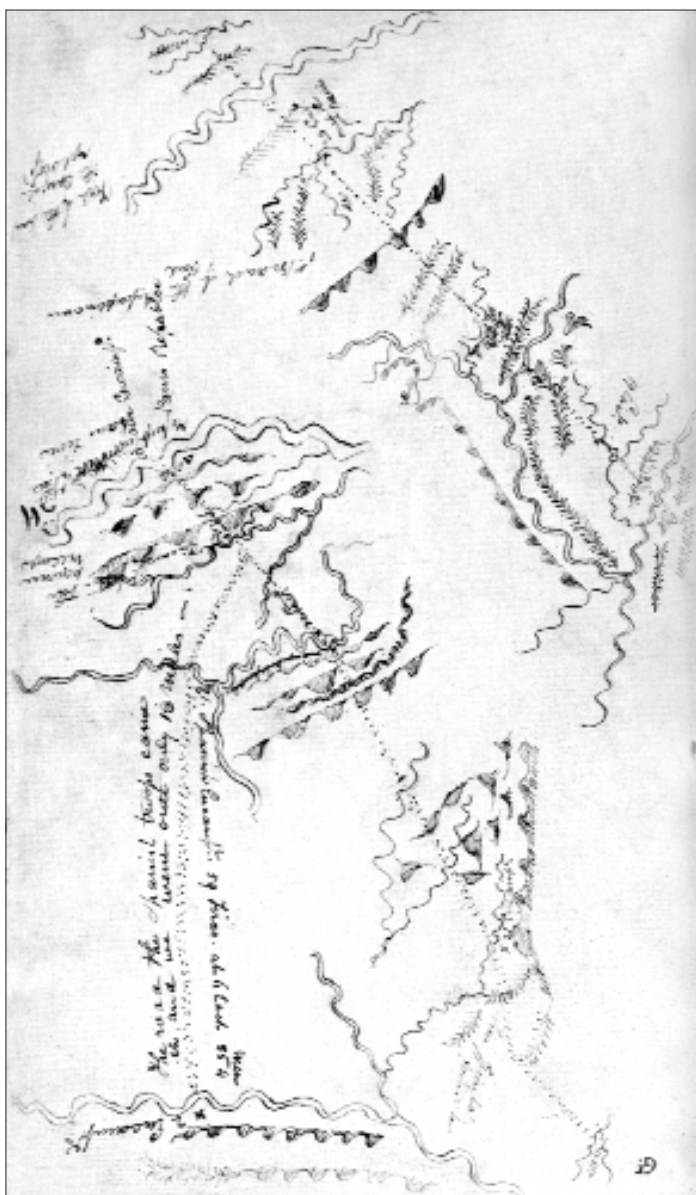
higher, until you arrive at its entrance, into the mountains. The whole of the timber is cotton wood, from the entrance of the Arkansas, in the mountains, to its source, a distance of about 170 miles; (by the meanders) it is alternately bounded by perpendicular precipices in small narrow prairies, on which the buffalo and elk have found the means to arrive, and are almost secure from danger, from their destroyer—Man.

. . . The borders of the Arkansas river may be termed the paradise (terrestrial) of our territories for the wandering savages. Of all countries ever visited by the footsteps of civilized man, there never was one probably that produced game in greater abundance, and we know that the manners and morals of the erratic nations, are such (the reasons I leave to be given by the ontologists) as never to give them a numerous population; and I believe that there are buffalo, elk, and deer sufficient on the banks of the Arkansaw alone, if used without waste, to feed all the savages in the United States territory one century. . . .

From the Arkansas to the Rio del Norte (the route I passed) the country was covered with mountains of small prairies, (as per chart) but the game became much more scarce owing to the vicinity of the Spanish Indians and the Spaniards themselves.

In this western traverse of Louisiana, the general observations may be made, viz: that from the Missouri to the head of the Osage river, a distance in a straight line of probably 300 miles, the country will admit of numerous, extensive and compact population; from thence on the rivers Kanzas, La Platte, Arkansaw, and their various branches. It appears to me to be only possible, to introduce a limited population on their banks. The inhabitants would find it most to their advantage, to pay attention to the multiplication of cattle, horses, sheep, and goats; all of which they can raise in abundance, the earth producing spontaneously sufficient for their support, both winter and summer, by which means their herds might become immensely numerous; but the wood now in the country, would not be sufficient for a moderate share of population, more than 15 years, and then it would be out of the question to think of using any of it in manufactories, consequently their houses would be built entirely of mud-brick (like those in New Spain) or of the brick manufactured with fire. But possibly time may make the discovery of coal mines, which would render the country habitable. . . .

Numerous have been the hypothesis formed by various naturalists, to account for the vast tract of untimbered country which lies between the waters of the Missouri,



Pike's manuscript maps are difficult to read. The above is one page of his map showing the expedition's march through present Kansas and its approach to the Pawnee village on the Republican River. The village area can be seen on the left-center portion of the map.

Mississippi, and the western Ocean, from the mouth of the latter river to the 48° north latitude. Although not flattering myself to be able to elucidate that, which numbers of highly scientific characters, have acknowledged to be beyond their depth of research; still, I would not think I had done my country justice, did I not give birth to what few lights my examination of those internal deserts has enabled me to acquire. In that vast country of which we speak, we find the soil generally dry and sandy, with gravel, and discover that the moment we approached a stream, the land becomes more humid with small timber; I therefore conclude, that this country never was timbered, as from the earliest age, the aridity of the soil having so few water courses running through it, and they being principally dry in summer, has never afforded moisture sufficient to support the growth of timber. In all timbered land, the annual discharge of the leaves, with the continual decay of old trees and branches, creates a manure and moisture, which is preserved from the heat of the sun not being permitted to direct his rays perpendicularly, but only to shed them obliquely through the foliage. But here a barren soil, parched and dried up for eight months of the year, presents neither moisture nor nutrition sufficient, to nourish the timber. These vast plains of the western hemisphere, may become in time equally celebrated as the sandy deserts of Africa; for I saw in my route, in various places, tracts of many leagues, where the wind had thrown up the sand, in all the fanciful forms of the ocean's rolling wave, and on which not a speck of vegetable matter existed.

But from these immense prairies may arise one great advantage to the United States, viz: The restriction of our population to some certain limits, and thereby a continuation of the union. Our citizens being so prone to rambling and extending themselves, on the frontiers, will, through necessity, be constrained to limit their extent on the west, to the borders of the Missouri and Mississippi, while they leave the prairies incapable of cultivation to the wandering and uncivilized aborigines of the country. 